BOOKS AND AUTHORS — REVIEWS AND COMMENT

LITERARY CRITICISM AND BOOK NEWS

A Roxburghe Club Book in Memory of the Late Whitelaw Reid—Houston Stewart Chamberlain on Wagner.

THE LOYALISTS.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE LOSSES AND SERVICES OF AMERICAN LOYALISTS, 1783 to 1785. Being the Notes of Mr. Daniel Parker Coke, M. P., one of the Commissioners During That Period. Edited by Hugh Edward Egerton, Beit Professor of Colonial History in the University of Oxford. With a Frontispiece. Quarto, pp. lx, 422. Oxford: Printed for Presentation to the Members of the Roxburghe Club.

The historical status of the American loyalists has oscillated between two equally grotesque extremes. On the one hand, they have been regarded as "a mere sack of office-holders and politicians on the make"; on the other, as "prospective martyrs on behalf of King and Empire." They were, of course, neither supermen nor persons of contemptible degree, but just ordinary human creatures who, from a diversity of motives, came into disastrous conflict with the great issue of their time. It is precisely in the ordinary, average nature of their experiences that they are of interest to-day. They fill out certain sections of the broad fundamental record and aid us therefore in the comprehension of really representative conditions. For this reason the present volume constitutes a very practical addition to the subject.

It has come into existence through a train of circumstances started by the late Whitelaw's Reid strong interest in the formative period of our history. In his life-long study of public affairs he was always reckoning with the play of national traits, and he made exhaustive researches into the earlier forces of American development. When as Ambassador to England he was called upon to deliver addresses on subjects of his own choosing he loved to analyze some phase of our political growth having its origin in the days of our emergence as a nation. Thus his speech at Cambridge in 1906 on "The Rise of the United States" is essentially an essay on Colonial characteristics; when he spoke on "The Scot in America," at Edinburgh, five years later, it was to expose further points in the same theme; and the portrait of Jefferson which he drew for his audience at the University College of Wales, only a few weeks before his death, gives one more testimony to his profound knowledge of all that went to the foundation of the Republic. Peculiarly appropriate, then, was the selection of the Coke papers to be dedicated and presented to the Roxburghe Club in his memory. In purchasing them for this purpose from Mr. Quaritch, through Lord Rosebery, who had undertaken to act for her in the matter and to secure an editor, Mrs. Reid not only marked her husband's alliance with a bookish organization for which he had a special predilection, but rendered exactly the kind of service to historical investigation which he would have himself preferred. He knew, from much experience, the importance of original sources. He would have rejoiced over the identification of his name with a precious manuscript now made accessible to the scholar.

Coke's digest of the cases that came before him owes its weight to his methodical habit of mind and perhaps even more to his disinterestedness. When Lord Shelbourne appointed him one of the Commissioners to look into the claims of the loyalists he consented to serve only on condition that he should receive no compensation. He had at the outset small sympathy for the people who were to appear before him and his colleagues, but he was resolved to be just, and to this end he sought to preserve the independence of his judgment in the completest detachment. It may be noted in passing that he soon came to feel compassion for many of the claimants. On one occasion, when the matter had come up in the House, he remarked that "he had discovered such merit and sufferings, and such fidelity and attachment to the Government, that he now entertained the warmest sentiments in their favour." But he had to exercise the sharpest discrimination to arrive at this conclusion.

It was a motley company, if ever there was one, that gradually formed itself in London, to haunt the doors of the Commission and bewail if not curse its leisurely tactics. Professor Egerton, in his learned introduction, observes that the first thing to strike one amongst the claimants is their very miscellaneous character. "In this crowd the peer and the ex-colonial governor are found side by side with the liberated slave." And to make the task of the Commissioners the more arduous there were, inevitably, a certain number of impostors in the ruck. These latter, however, were examined with a thoroughness that, as the proceedings were on, easily discouraged imitation. The claims disallowed as flatly fraudulent were on the whole surprisingly few in number. The majority, if readily enough authenticated, were at the same time fraught with difficulties for the Commissioners. All the loyalists were not necessarily to be credited with the same kind or degree of fidelity to the King. First, naturally, came those who had rendered tangible services to Great Britain, and close behind them were the loyalists who had borne arms in her cause. But then the cases had to be very ingeniously graded, through the ranks of plausible turncoats and absentee proprietors to individuals of "great merit" and others who had met with "peculiar hardships." Still, the bald fact of loyalty was the main one to be established; the amount of suffering it entailed was another question altogether, and in some instances there was no suffering, only material loss, and that of no great moment. One can feel for the Commissioners. They must have had some tedious hours, trying to arrive at the perfect shade of compensation to which a given patriot was entitled.

Professor Egerton tells once again the familiar tale of loyalist vicissitude. To read of the tarrings and featherings which the faithful were ever ready to bestow upon any political backslider is to realize that the adherents of the King were indeed in sad case. But when the Whigs were not tarring the Tories the Tories were tarring the Whigs. It was pull devil, pull baker most of the time, a fact which the editor rightly emphasizes. Neither his sympathies nor the reader's are, to be sure, definitely engaged upon one side or the other. The loyalists, we know, were in the wrong, but, as has already been indicated, their story is very human. The rancors of that era are now as dead as Pharaoh, and as we look over the shoulder of the good Coke we forget everything save the comedy of the case in hand. There is, for example, that of Mr. Harrison Gray, jr., native of Boston, son of a member of the Mandamus Council. "When the troubles broke out his father was Treasurer of the Province & he was Deputy to his father. He took the same part with his father & was steadily attached to this Country [England]. He had no Opportunity of distinguishing himself by his Exertions & he never bore Arms. He was never ill treated by the Mob. He left Boston in August, 1775, & came home to England on account of his health." Delightful is the affidavit of old John Chandler, sworn as a witness in this case. Yes, he had known Gray from his infancy and believed him to be a loyalist. But about that little matter of the claimant's going to England on account of his health—he was not so sure. "Does not know that he was much out of order & believes that nothing ail'd him. Says he believes that he came away from fear of being killed." Exit Master Gray, but we hear of him in a footnote, leading "a grumbling existence" in London, down to 1830, with a small pension from the government. That small pension is characteristic. Coke and the others were severe in their scrutiny of the claims submitted to them, but they were not ungenerous. The claims examined totalled something over eight million pounds sterling. Of this amount they allowed £3,033,091, surely a fair proportion as such things go.

The loyalists, in short, were well treated by the country to which they elected to cling. In Benjamin West's allegorical picture of "The Reception of the American Loyalists by Great Britain in the Year 1783," reproduced as a frontispiece to this volume, the mantle of Britannia is supported by Religion and Justice, and with her arm and shield she extends her protection to the refugees who had fled our shores. The situation is not overdrawn. Coke's pages confirm it in every detail and the historian will appreciatively consult him on the question of England's policy toward a notable group of her children. But even more will this thoroughgoing and kindly commentator be read by both historian and layman for the piquancies buried in his formal text. Professor Egerton deftly guides us to the desirable plums. He detaches the claims which illustrate the circumstances of doctors, lawyers and clergymen, and which, through details of professional income, throw light on the economic history of the period. He brings out the sometimes cynical and sometimes quaint divagations of the officeholding class. There was "fixed at Savannah when the troubles broke out" a Master Stephen Haven, who there exercised the functions of naval officer of Georgia. He was thus "fixed" at the tender age of fifteen, and was wont to hand over his emoluments to his mother. The Commission balked at giving him all he asked for, but the clever youth nevertheless contrived to extort a bounty of £60 a year from the authorities at Whitehall. And there were some lion-hearted men in the lot, like John Chandler, to whom we have already referred. They called him "the modest refugee" because his claims were so reasonable. He had this to say for himself: "After suffering the most cruel insults, being deprived of his liberty and threatened in the most alarming manner, unless he would sacrifice his loyalty to the King, renounce the Worcester Protest, which he had promoted and signed, and adopt in its stead a very treasonable league and covenant. . . . he was obliged, in order to save himself from an ignominious death, to fly from his home." He was an old man, leaving sixteen children behind him, when he sought asylum in London.

There is a touch of drama in the Chandler case—and it is not the only one to be in that way enlivened. Coke makes his notes without emotion, simply, tersely, with an eye to facts. But he makes them face to face with men, some of whom have known high adventures. In spite of himself he gives us, on occasion, a poignant sense of old, unhappy far-off things and battles long ago.

MRS. T. P. O'CONNOR.
("Dog Stars": The George H. Doran Company.)

STEPHEN LEACOCK.
("Moonbeams from the Larger Lunacy": The John Lane Company.)

MAY SINCLAIR.
("A Journal of Impressions in Belgium": The Macmillan Company.)

ALFRED THE GREAT

His Historic Claims to Greatness —The Legends.

ALFRED THE GREAT: The Truth Teller, Maker of England. 848–899. By Beatrice Adelaide Lees, sometime tutor at Somerville College, Oxford. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. xx., 492. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

A worthy work, on a great theme. The theme is, indeed, great in several senses: Nominally, of course, and also actually, whether we regard the personality of the man, or his work, or yet the place which he fills alike in history and romance. It is noteworthy that in the long line of English sovereigns of various dynasties Alfred is the only one who is called "the Great"; for while the title is also given and not unworthily to Canute, it is as a Danish rather than as an English king. Other lands have been more generous. France, always much given to titles of all sorts, has had no fewer than six "great" Kings; Spain, four; Prussia, Portugal, Russia and the old German Empire each thus distinguished two sovereigns; little Wales called four of her rulers great, while Ireland and Hungary are content with one each. Precisely why Alfred was selected for this solitary distinction in the English line it might be difficult to say. Two or three of the Henrys, and at least two of the Edwards, might well have been chosen, with Elizabeth and Victoria; not to mention the Protector. Indeed, several of these made a much more striking appeal to the imagination than Alfred, in the way in which Frederick II of Prussia and Henry IV and Louis XIV of France won their "greatness."

Miss Lees's admirable work does not enter into this discussion in terms, but it makes clear the ample titles of its subject to the unique distinction. These are not, however, the legendary grounds, familiar to every one of Macaulay's multitudinous schoolboys. The Alfred of pious myth is not neglected by the author, but she considers him chiefly to show how vastly greater and better is truth than fiction. It is vain to talk of him as the founder of the English navy, as the inventor of local government, as the establisher of trial by jury, as the creator of the University of Oxford. With all of these achievements he was, indeed, associated, but not to him or to any one man is the sole credit of them due. Still less judicious is it to speak of him as the maker of England, though a maker of England he unquestionably was. We may rank him in that capacity, among the ancients, with Canute, the first William, the second Henry and the first Edward. Perhaps we may even call him among them "primus inter pares." But certainly all these others contributed largely and essentially to the making of England.

It was Alfred's special distinction, as Miss Lees persuasively and convincingly points out, that he made England English. In the ninth century the kingdom was still in an embryonic state. A sufficiently strong influence could have made it any of several other things than what it did become. Had Alfred perished at Ethandun, it is not improbable that England and all the British Isles would have become Scandinavian. Had Alfred not compiled his code, the common law of England might have become Roman instead of Anglo-Saxon. Had he not labored with brain and pen, the language and literature of England might have been Norse, or Latin, instead of the marvellous complex which we call English. Had it not been for him the earlier records of the realm might have been forever lost. It was he who, at the psychological moment, gave England the bent which made her forever English. He was able to establish a system of law, of speech and of thought—in brief, a national genius—which could survive alike the Danish and the Norman conquests and cause the conquerors to be assimilated in time by the conquered.

There is probably nothing in the world more ungrateful for a historian to do than to smash popular idols or to dispel cherished traditions. There is, however, nothing more essential; when it needs to be done. Miss Lees has not shrunk from the task, but she will probably not incur the odium which too often attaches to it. That is because of the transparent integrity of her purpose, her disinterested devotion to the truth—the truth-telling which was characteristic of her famous subject. It is also because, while she smashes the somewhat fantastic effigy of imaginative legend, she reveals in its place a far more impressive and engaging figure, which is vital and truthful. Her Alfred is no lay figure, tricked out in motley as the hero of a fable. He is "every inch a King," and a King in the dual senses—if we may cite familiar but false etymology in connection with such a theme—of one who both "can" and "kens," a King who was great both in doing and in knowing. His military achievements were not inconsiderable. His administrative powers amounted to something like genius. His literary labors alone would have entitled him to fame. These manifold works of his are not merely chronicled in the book before us. They are analyzed, discussed and appraised with authority, so that the reader gets a convincing view of Alfred not only as a man, and not only as one of the commanding figures of the world in his time, but also as the originator of influences and institutions which, scarcely comprehended in his day, have abided and increased and prevailed until they are at least as great a system among the systems of the world to-day as he was a great man among the men of the world in his day. That is the most honorable view of that first great English King, and that is the view most profitably to be taken by those who at this long distance study his epochal career.

WAGNER AS DRAMATIST

An Anglo-Teuton's Unquestioning Enthusiasms.

THE WAGNERIAN DRAMA. By Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Translated by George Dunning Gribble. 8vo, pp. 246. The John Lane Company.

Absolute certainty is a quality beloved of all young races; therefore the works of Houston Stewart Chamberlain should be popular in America. Mr. Chamberlain has little use for doubts or doubters, for half-lights, for epicurean meanderings, or for any of the other excrescences of a super-refined civilization. He has not expressed it, but we can imagine what he would think of, say, Anatole France! This latest work of his is fully as positive as was his "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century." In it, as the good son-in-law of Richard Wagner that he is, he swallows the whole Wagnerian philosophy, hook, bait and sinker, and fearlessly declares that in the Wagnerian music-drama art has reached its human acme.

Says Mr. Chamberlain of Wagner's art: "It is the most comprehensive art which man has produced so far, and it is the purest art." It is evident that Mr. Chamberlain will never write in praise of Lessing's "Laocoon," in which is condemned the fusing of the arts! "The Wagnerian Drama" is, then, one continued pæan in praise, not so much of Wagner's music, as of Wagner's artistic system. The "Word-Tone-Drama," the artistic union of Dancing, Music and Poetry, which is the basis of the great composer's faith, has been tested by Mr. Chamberlain and been proclaimed firm and eternal. Opera and pure music are alike lower forms of musical art, while Wagner, through his great range and his ability to express the "Purely-Human," the hidden soul of man, which can be expressed only through the power of music, has risen superior to both Sophocles and Shakespeare.

Yet despite his almost sophomoric certainty in himself and his beliefs, Mr. Chamberlain throughout his book shows consistent insight into the purposes of his great father-in-law, and he writes many pages of searching analysis. "In opera music is altogether the exterior part, whereas it is destined by its very nature to be always and everywhere the inmost soul of things." This is Wagner's belief in a nutshell. "All his works, from first to last, were born out of the spirit of music"—a statement, which, however, does not entirely square with his previous one that Wagner was a dramatist before he was a musician. "Wagner has released music"—to-day we hear this statement made of Debussy. Perhaps it is true of both. In short, throughout his general discussion of Wagner's philosophy Mr. Chamberlain takes it as gospel, *à priori*. To him Wagner completely succeeded in doing what he set out to do. His Word-Tone-Drama is a perfect wedlock of words, music and action. Richard Wagner stands alone amid the ruins of his own Walhalla!

It is in his detailed discussion of the various music-dramas that Mr. Chamberlain is at his best, though some of his assertions may well be questioned, as, for instance, when he says that "the poet's inspiration and power of creation are no greater in 'Tristan' than in 'Tannhäuser.'" His analysis of "Tristan" in its relation to the poem of Gottfried von Strassburg is most interesting, especially in its discussion of Wagner's addition of the Death Potion by which "a sensual poem becomes the most sublime song of hopeless but purest love." Felicitously, too, does he put the character of Hans Sachs: "The struggle is entirely within—a struggle against his own regrets." And truly does he add that only by the aid of music can such internal struggle be most powerfully expressed.

On the Ring Mr. Chamberlain makes some very pertinent remarks. He says that as a result of the usual performances the Ring is entirely misunderstood, it being impossible to give the works separately and to retain their meaning. Wotan and the struggle within him and his great victory of self-destruction are the basic themes of the cycle and, treated separately, the unity of idea is lost. "Parsifal," he avers, is not necessarily a Christian work. Christian symbolism was used only because it was the nearest at hand. In conclusion, Mr. Chamberlain holds that music should expose a "revelation from another world" rather than mere "analysis of sound," such as the composers of opera achieve.

"The Wagnerian Drama" is all in all a most interesting if most biassed work, yet in this generation faith is rare, so let us be thankful that faith untroubled can yet be found. One criticism may nevertheless be levelled at the book with perfect justice—the style is too often clumsy to the point of utter exasperation. Oh, for a vein of Gallic grace to leaven its weighty Teutonic content!

AN HUNGARIAN VIEW

Count Julius Andrassy on the Responsibility for the War.

WHOSE SIN IS THE WORLD-WAR? By Count Julius Andrassy. Translated from the Hungarian by Ernest J. Euphrat. 12mo, pp. 154. New York: New Era Publishing House.

It is easy to conclude from internal evidence that Count Andrassy's little book was written in the early days of the war. Even so, however, it is not without interest now, especially in its discussion of Russia's part in Balkan politics, with all its turns and twistings. Indeed, according to this Hungarian statesman, Russia's is the responsibility. She felt that she could not withdraw from her stand on the Serbian question without "losing face" and influence among the Slavs. It was, by the way, so the Hungarian statesman tells us, under the terms of a secret arrangement with Russia that Austria occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina, an arrangement that was confirmed at the peace of San Stefano, and ratified by the Powers at the Congress of Berlin.

With the *tu quoque* argument we are already sufficiently familiar: If Germany invaded Belgium, England broke the neutrality of Denmark and Portugal in Napoleonic days, not to mention her more recent treatment of the Boer republics. And Russia not only violated the neutrality of Rumania in 1877, but robbed her of part of her territory afterward in return for her timely succor at Plevna. And as for the Dual Monarchy's demands upon Serbia in the matter of the Serajevo murders, the Russian government had more than once claimed far greater rights from the Porte. All of which is already sufficiently familiar to us. Had Count Andrassy brought his argument down to date, he would certainly have included a reference to the Allies' occupation of Greek islands near the Dardanelles and their present march through the kingdom.

New historic viewpoints are always interesting, wherefore it is worth while to quote Count Andrassy's statement that "there is no doubt whatever that it was the Austrian Prime Minister Kaunitz who wanted what is known as the Seven Years' War, for it was he who plotted with France and Russia to attack Frederick II; still, the war was begun by the King of Prussia, who quickly saw that only by rushing the offensive could he save himself from being overwhelmed." Decidedly novel is the author's conviction that England made a fatal blunder in following her traditional Continental policy in the diplomacy that led to the war.

IDLE DAYS

A Book of American Winter and Summer Resorts.

IN VACATION AMERICA. By Harrison Rhodes. Illustrations by Howard Giles. 8vo, pp. 191. Harper & Bros.

Not a guidebook, this. A book of places, to be sure, but still more a book of the spirit of places, of the American holiday mood, in summer and winter. Mr. Rhodes makes, incidentally, enough suggestions to solve a long life's recurrent question of where to spend a vacation, but the delight of his book lies in the atmosphere it so cleverly interprets. We start from New York. At the end we return to it to recapitulate once more its attractions as a summer resort. As a winter resort it needs, of course, no commendation. But we begin really with the Jersey coast, the exclusive property, almost, of New York and Philadelphia, thence cross to Long Island, to work down east and up along via Newport, Narragansett and Cape Cod. Then south, to forgotten Virginian and Carolinian mountain resorts and springs; to the Great Lakes, to Niagara, with its faded romance of honeymoons, and up into the White Mountains. Having made a virtue of necessity in this year of chaos in Europe, we have learned, for once, that virtue may have its exceeding great rewards. Mr. Rhodes, indeed, proves to us that we need not go abroad to be happy and comfortable. Quite the reverse.

Then he has a happy knack of taking us back some fifty years, when Saratoga and the Saratoga trunk were in their glory, and the monster hotel was the height of fashion. We have changed all that, but, in the retrospect, how picturesque it all was, and how wholesomely American! Saratoga hotel parlors had their "proposal sofas"; and at Green Briar White Sulphur Spring the wood walks were called Lovers' Rest, Lovers' Walk, Courtship Maze, and, climax of the season, Acceptance Way to Paradise. It was the era of the Young Person in a far different, less complex way from that of to-day. "Even as late as the seventies or eighties it was said that purses were made up in little Southern towns to send likely maids or youths to the marriage mart of the Old White."

To return to our cities as summer resorts, here is what our author has to say of Boston:

> It is perhaps the greatest tourist centre, in the regulation European red-guide-book manner. It is at once the cradle of our liberties and the inventor of the sight-seeing trolley car. Here education bears fruit and the Daughters of the American Revolution come into their own. The intelligence of Boston is amazing, but it is as nothing compared with the intelligence of other cities about Boston. If you will sit some summer morning in a quiet corner of Faneuil Hall you will see all America go by—in samples—and you will be forced to admit that your chair compares favorably with those somewhat more famous ones of the Café de la Paix, from which you see every one in the world pass.

With the wonders of the West, the beauties of the Pacific Coast, Mr. Rhodes is not concerned. But for a vacation trip in an easy chair in our own part of our country nothing more delightful, more truly American, can be found than this most welcome book of his.

THE NORWEGIANS

A Book of Interest to Students of English History.

Professor Knut Gjerset's two-volume "History of the Norwegian People" (Macmillan) is of immediate interest to American readers for its account of the influence of the Norsemen on the development of Northern Europe. The author shows that the Vikings, far from being the freebooters they are popularly believed to have been, were the founders of the first colonial empire in Northern Europe and the originators of the first systematized commerce in that part of the world. Professor Gjerset describes the deep and permanent influence which the Norsemen have exerted on Scotland through their extensive colonization in that country, the traces of their settlements in England, and the part they have played in the development of English commerce and city life, their occupation of Ireland, and the origin and fate of their colonies on the adjacent islands. Their activity as explorers in the North Atlantic, their extensive colonial possessions, their building of great commercial cities and development of important trade routes are interesting features, not only of Norwegian but of general mediæval history. The second volume contains a chapter on Norwegian emigration and the life of the Norwegians in this country.